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ABSTRACT

This report describes three programs in Oregon and Washington which provide opportunities for teachers to update their skills by spending their summer in structured work experience or internship programs in business and industry. Benefits to teachers are listed as well as characteristics of successful programs. The programs are: (1) Economic Education/Business Experience (EE/BE), a program for academic teachers and counselors which gives an orientation to economic theory and an in-depth understanding of the workings of business by combining a one-month internship with a university seminar; (2) The Occupational Internship and Seminar, a program for vocational teachers which also combines university work with an internship in business; and (3) Technical Skill Update, a community-based program which offers vocational staff firsthand experience to supplement their awareness of technological changes. Eight similar programs from around the United States are also listed. Comments taken from a survey of participants describe reasons for participation, benefits to the participants, benefits to the employers, and benefits the participants expect to pass on to their students. Issues to consider in developing similar programs are discussed including 11 recommendations for program development. A bibliography of 13 references and a directory of nine organizations are included. (DC)

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Out of the Classroom, Into Industry: Summer School for Teachers. Ideas for Action in Education and Work.

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Out of the Classroom, Into Industry: Summer School for Teachers

"Ideas to Improve My Teaching Techniques"

High School: A Report on Secondary Education in America (Boyer 1983) cautions us: "The time has come to recognize that continuing education must be an essential part of the professional life of every teacher...Excellence in education will be achieved only as we invest in the education of teachers in the classroom... Perhaps the most promising role for corporations is the renewal of the teacher" (pages 179 and 273).

This "renewal" that Boyer refers to is happening in many school districts across the country. Both academic and vocational teachers are taking advantage of their local community's willingness to help them effectively prepare students for the adult world. The speed at which technological change is occurring makes it critical for an effective teacher to be a lifelong learner. This report documents how three programs in the Northwest are actively supporting this notion.

There is a growing body of research that suggests it is important for schools to help young people prepare for employment and for a life as a contributing member of society. Studies of what employers expect from recent high school graduates consistently call for increased responsibility; basic reading, writing and computing skills; the ability to listen and cooperate with others; and a willingness to learn new job skills when demanded by technological changes. In spite of what some recent educational reports are saying about the quality of today's public school teachers, many faculty members are committed to these "demands" of the business world. They are seeking ways to integrate their course objectives with world of work realities. Some of these staff are in unique programs such as Experience-Based Career Education (EBCE) or the Executive High School Internship Program; some are in regular academic or vocational classrooms. While teachers in EBCE and other similar alternative programs have daily contacts with their local business communities (contact NWREL for program profile), their colleagues in typical classrooms do not have such opportunities. This latter group of teachers uses other options to increase their familiarity with business and industry.

IDEAS FOR ACTION in Education and Work

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

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One way teachers can update skills is by spending their summer time off involved in a structured work experience. Sometimes called internships, these opportunities offer numerous incentives for teachers including:

- Graduate credit
- Inservice credit
- Wages
- Certificate update/renewal
- Professional growth and enrichment
- Curriculum ideas
- Contacts for career activities in the classroom
- Greater understanding of how economics and academics relate
- Job skills that students need to know

As usual, some programs are more successful than others. Research on programs nationwide and in the Northwest underline the following ingredients of success:

1. Participation is voluntary.
2. The experience relates directly to the teaching responsibility.
3. There is a "training" plan or agreement with clear goals.
4. Credit is awarded by the school district or a college or both.
5. Teachers receive a stipend or wages.
6. There is guidance for the teacher to engage in curriculum redesign.
7. Teachers receive an overall picture of business as well as actual job experience.

Some of these summer experiences are paid and some are not; some offer graduate credit and some offer inservice credit; some are accompanied by academic course work and some are not. Obviously, there is great variety in program structures depending on local needs. There is little variety, however, in the benefits. In the words of the teachers, they are finding "ideas to improve my teaching techniques." Therefore, they are "able to relate classroom activities to the 'real' world."

Successful Programs in the Northwest

Following is a short description of three Northwest programs we studied. More detailed information can be obtained from the contact person listed.

Economic Education/Business Experience (EE/BE) is sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and the Washington State Council on Economic Education. It has operated in Spokane and Seattle, Washington for the past eight years and has become a model for Chambers of Commerce in other locations. EE/BE offers educators an orientation to economic theory while they receive an in-depth understanding of the daily workings of a major business firm. The participants are academic teachers and counselors who spend one month of the summer as an intern in a corporate setting.

The teachers receive a stipend from their sponsoring firms; they combine productive work with gaining an exposure to all aspects of the business operation--from the assembly line to staff meetings to decision making board meetings. They participate in a week-long seminar at Seattle Pacific University (or Whitworth College in Spokane) and a four-day follow-up session to plan ways to use newly acquired information for curriculum development. For the classroom component, participants receive college credit and some tuition costs may be subsidized by the Council on Economic Education. Since 1976, 174 teachers have completed EE/BE in Washington. As a result, an estimated 70,000 students have been in classes taught by teachers with recent "hands-on" experience in private industry. (Contact person: Ken Leonard, Washington State Council on Economic Education, 206/622-0965.)

The Occupational Internship and Seminar is a summer program operated by the Oregon State University. Participants are vocational teachers who receive between three and twelve graduate credits for their experience; approximately 33 clock hours earn one hour of credit. Teachers enroll in the internship program for a variety of reasons: to obtain supervised work experience in a business that is directly related to their teaching

specialty; to update vocational skills; to acquire vocational certification or renewal of teaching endorsement; to earn graduate credit; and to supplement income.

Each participant completes a Training Plan and Agreement that includes an evaluation of previous work experience as well as present/future career objectives. This Training Plan delineates the kind of internship that is most appropriate, the nature of the supervision and the specific relationship of the experience to the person's role as a vocational teacher.

The actual internship is complemented by an ongoing seminar which is designed to teach/reinforce related technical and professional competencies. A major "assignment" in the seminar is to develop new teaching strategies to fit the vocational curriculum for which the teacher is responsible. In addition, participants research occupational trends and compile a data profile of local business/industry sites that have potential for high school or community college training sites. (Contact person: Eleanor Knapp, the Oregon State University, 503/754-3681.)

Technical Skill Update is operated by the Career and Vocational Education Department of the Portland Public Schools (PPS) as part of their effort to meet the occupational needs of youth and work force needs of the community. PPS believes very strongly in the value of professional development to help vocational staff gain first-hand experience to supplement their awareness of technological changes.

Essential elements of this community based program include:

- Data for teachers regarding current industry standards and needs
- A process to determine each teacher's skill upgrading needs
- Access to local business and industry to obtain the identified skill update

Each teacher completes an Occupational Upgrading Plan that outlines their goals for the summer work experience. Upon completion, the immediate supervisor evaluates the performance so that the teacher is assured of gaining valuable information about both technological changes and personal skill acquisitions. (Contact person: Warren Rathbun, Portland Public Schools, 503/249-2000.)

There are similar programs elsewhere in the country with expertise and materials to share. These programs include:

Staff/Industry Exchange Project
Bureau of Vocational Education
2138 Capital Plaza Tower
Frankfort, KY 40601

Teacher Intern Program
Rochester Area Career Education Council
12 Mortimer St.
Rochester, NY 14604

Teacher/Business Program
Rexnord Resource Center
P.O. Box 2022
Milwaukee, WI 53201

Teacher Work-Learn Program
Joseph T. Ryerson and Son, Inc.
Box 8000-A
Chicago, IL 60680

Classrooms in Industry
Business Education Alliance
Greater Detroit Chamber of Commerce
150 Michigan Avenue
Detroit, MI 48226

Educators-in-Industry
General Electric Company
Fairfield, CT 06431

Summer Career and Economic Education Program for Educators
Security Pacific National Bank
P.O. Box 2097, T.A.
Los Angeles, CA 90051

Teacher Internship
Wells Fargo Bank
475 Sansome Street
San Francisco, CA 94163

Participant Responses

* "My teaching will be more meaningful."
* "I chose to participate to learn job entry skills for my students upon graduation."

* "I want to know how to better train these students so they will be of greater value to the employer."

* "Had an opportunity to work with newest equipment."

* "I gained insights into how the business world operates."

* "I now have a better idea of the skills my ESL [English As a Second Language] students need for jobs in the private sector."

* "It acquainted me with the skills necessary for entry-level positions."

* "I am more able to relate classroom activities to the "real" world."

* "I have a greater insight into the corporate structure."

* "Opportunities to work with business have been identified."

* "I grew in my understanding of our mutual goals for educating students."

These are but a few of the comments given by 32 teachers who responded to a survey distributed by NWREL. All of these educators, including one counselor, one student teacher candidate and one community college instructor, felt that their 1982 "summer school" experience was very beneficial. On a scale of 1 to 5, with #5 representing "very helpful", and #1 representing "not helpful", only 7 responses selected #4 with all others selecting #5. This is a clear indication of success of the three programs documented in this report. Another indicator of success can be seen in response to the question, "Would you want to participate in a similar program next year?" Almost all respondents said "yes", they would like to participate again and most said they would like to be "at a different site for a new experience in a new environment." This desire to explore new areas illustrates a commitment to the lifelong learning process that is crucial for teachers, particularly vocational teachers, to keep pace with changing work and employment demands.

Of the participants in this survey, all except four work with students in grades 9 through 12. Two teach grades 7 and 8, one is responsible for some 6th graders, and one teaches in a community college. Two-thirds were male. All are currently employed, except the one student teacher candidate.

In these three programs, most, but not all, participants earned either wages or a stipend. Of the 32 respondents, however, only two listed "Money/Pay" as "the most important reason you chose to participate in this program."

All participants were asked to select their primary reason for participation. Their answers tallied as follows:

Professional Growth	16
Graduate credit	5
Certificate Update	3
Money	2
Salary scale credit	2
Other	4

Other reasons listed include:

1. "Job entry skills for students upon graduation."

2. "Gaining work experience towards vocational certification."

3. "To learn about something in next year's curriculum."

4. "Strictly to fulfill credential requirements."

When asked for secondary reasons for participation, "Money/Pay" accounted for about one-third of the responses, with other choices distributed fairly evenly. Three of the other secondary reasons offered include:

1. "I need to be more qualified."
2. "It sounded like an interesting opportunity to do something different."
3. "A needed change of pace."

It is interesting to note that teachers rate professional growth as the greatest motivator with money and salary scale credit as the least important motivator. There were only two respondents who had

any negative reaction and both indicated that state certification requirements gave them no choice about engaging in such a summer work experience. Nevertheless, of these two, only one could not cite direct benefits their students will receive.

Almost without exception, the participating teachers felt that their internship changed their perceptions about (1) the daily realities of private business/industry, (2) the teacher's role in preparing youth for work and (3) the skills required for the career area of their internship.

Respondents felt strongly about their opportunities to acquire updated information regarding advanced technologies, new occupational information and a better understanding of the world of work. In general, they felt less strongly about professional benefits related to new job skills and contacts in the community for supplementing classroom learning.

Perhaps the most important question that we asked participants was, "As a result of this internship, what are the two most important benefits you expect your students to receive? (Check no more than two)." Results are in parentheses.

(23) More relevant classes because you relate lessons to the realities of work and employment

(17) Updated information about advanced technologies in your vocational area

(9) Increased awareness of career opportunities

(8) Increased enthusiasm on your part

(2) Other

These responses illustrate the teachers' feelings of confidence that their classes will be more meaningful and up to date as a result of the "summer school" experience in private industry.

More than ever, the worlds of business and education need to support each other in a fluctuating economy of technological advancements. The mutuality of this was expressed by many of the teachers we surveyed. Generally, the teachers felt that employers developed a positive and more supportive attitude about educators. Teacher comments included:

> "My activities offered an awareness to the business of our mutual interest and a more detailed plan of ways to work together."
>
> "I felt they were enlightened about teaching and present trends in education."
>
> "I offered a different perspective."
>
> "I was able to make several good suggestions for their Five Year Plan."
>
> "Many of the employees here expressed an interest in visiting my high school...many employees had a new view of public education."

Although employer interviews were not a planned component of this particular study, we did obtain comments from a limited number. As we have learned from other industry-education collaborative efforts, business people would like more follow-up information. They want to know how useful their efforts were and how valuable it was to the teachers and their students. One employer said she was not sure how students would benefit from their teacher's internship, but that "it would be more worth my time if I got more feedback from the teachers about what they gained and how they profited." Another employer implied that his corporation considered not participating again this year "because they aren't sure how the schools benefit and what the classroom impact is." A planned system for informal feedback would document the benefits that are reported here, particularly for personnel who don't have direct contact with the teachers.

Issues to Consider

Teacher internship programs have far-reaching benefits for local employers and the education community as well as for students and teachers. No one right way exists to initiate and operate such programs; local variables must be carefully considered as implementation decisions are made. Nevertheless, there

are some general principles that can increase program success and longevity. These issues were derived from participants' responses to three survey questions:

- Please describe any problems/difficulties you encountered.
- Would you want to participate in a similar program next year?
- What can you offer as suggestions for improvement of future programs?

Participants' responses focused on the following areas:

Management/accountability
Business/education cooperation
Certification
Setting goals
Success and survival

Based on their responses, the following recommendations are made.

1. Carefully consider the potential benefits to academic teachers and counselors, as well as to those in vocational areas.
2. Encourage business and industry to jointly plan curriculum and other aspects of the internship.
3. Develop a Training Plan as a part of the internship to help structure the learning experience for both the teachers and the employer.
4. Goals for the Training Plan should be cooperatively developed by the teacher and the employer.
5. Businesses and schools should recognize and publicize their successes on a regular basis.
6. Provide a means for teachers to reflect on the internship; involve business people in discussions and sharing.
7. When a class or seminar structure does not exist, provide a mid-point meeting to compare notes, assess progress and offer suggestions.
8. Attempt to plan internships that expose participants to the overall picture of business as well as to the daily realities of a specific job.
9. Assist teachers in starting related curriculum development or revision efforts; provide ways for teachers to share their ideas.
10. School districts should actively encourage participating teachers to share with colleagues information about summer internships.
11. Provide follow-up sessions to support teachers as they integrate their new skills and knowledge with their instructional programs.

A question often raised is, "What other ways are there for industries to increase teacher effectiveness?" In addition to adopt-a-school programs, providing career exploration and cooperative work experience sites for youth, hosting field trips and sponsoring career fairs, businesses can assist teachers in the following ways:

- Participating in employability and labor market workshops
- Donating equipment and materials
- Providing personnel
- Granting funds
- Providing career redirection assistance or job skill training for displaced teachers
- Providing classroom space for school courses
- Participating in school district inservice programs
- Providing assistance with curriculum design and revision

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ORGANIZATIONS

Chamber of Commerce of the U.S.
Business and Economic Clearinghouse
1615 H St., N.W., Washington, DC 20062

Committee for Economic Development
477 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022

ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career & Vocational Education, National Center for Research in Vocational Education, 1960 Kenny Rd., Columbus OH 43210

National Alliance of Business
Communications Division, 1015 15th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20005

National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation, 235 Hendricks Blvd, Buffalo, NY 14226

National Association of Manufacturers,
1776 F St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20006

National Association of Private Industry Councils, 1625 I St., N.W. Suite 913, Washington, DC 20006

National Institute for Work & Learning
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Editor's Note

IDEAS FOR ACTION IN EDUCATION AND WORK synthesize information from research and practice on topics of current interest. Other titles in the series include:

Removing Barriers to CETA/School Collaboration (out of print)

Improving Learning in the Workplace

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